

## **KWOK Mang-ho**

### **Suggested class activities for Junior Secondary**

**Artist:** KWOK Mang-ho

**Level:** Junior Secondary

**Theme:** Creating Characters with the “Sandwich Font”

**Suggested length:** 4 hours

**Teaching concept:**

In the 1970s, new forms of art appeared in the Western art world, bringing new insights to the traditional static forms of art. Artists began interacting with audience through alternative creative forms, transforming static art into dynamic art, and breaking the barrier between artists and audience. KWOK Mang-ho, also known as “Frog King”, is an avant-garde Hong Kong artist with a unique image. He has been creating through improvisation for over 40 years. His works go beyond traditional art media in random, relaxed, fun-filled performances to convey his creative vision.

This course aims to introduce KWOK Mang-ho’s creation through improvisation and his ongoing Froggy Sunglasses project to students, and help them to understand new forms of art creation by making artworks with different materials and interacting with each other to share happiness.

**Required background knowledge:**

1. The students should have prior experience in Chinese calligraphy.

**Teaching goals:**

1. Learn about and appreciate KWOK’s artistic concepts through his video.
2. Learn about the characteristics of KWOK’s self-invented “sandwich font”.
3. Create a “sandwich font” with Chinese ink.
4. Learn about interaction and performance as alternative forms of expressive art.

**Preparation before class:** Ask the students to search the lyrics of songs they know for their favourite lines.

**Suggested class activities:**

1. **Video viewing guide (Suggested length: 5 mins)**

**Show the “Artist Introduction ppt” p1**

Show the picture of KWOK Mang-ho, the “Frog King”. Ask the students to guess his identity and occupation.



Taken from Artist Video 12:22

Suggested questions:

- What do you think the subject's occupation is? Why?
- KWOK Mang-ho is a Hong Kong artist. Have you seen his art works before? What are the characteristics of his works?

2. **Introduce KWOK Mang-ho and his artistic style (Suggested length: 20mins)**

**Play the “Artist Video mp4” 0:00– 07:10 and 9:11-12:50 and show the “Artist Introduction ppt” pp2-4**

Born in Guangdong in 1947 and raised in Hong Kong, KWOK Mang-ho graduated from Fine Art courses at the Grantham College of Education in Hong Kong in 1970. He pursued overseas studies at the Art Students League of New York between 1980 and 1984. He returned to and settled in Hong Kong in 1995. KWOK received the Urban Council Fine Arts Awards– Sculpture 1975 and Mixed Media 1998. He was awarded The Best Community Arts Service Group Award, NEA, New York City in 1987, Hong Kong Arts Development Council Emeritus Fellowship in 1998. In 2011, he represented Hong Kong at the 54th Venice Biennale. In 2013, he participated at Gyro Residency 2013 of Papay Gyro Nights. In 2016, he founded the Frog King Kwok Foundation (The North Atlantic–The Middle Pacific). KWOK's works are highly unique and diverse. With infinite possibilities and abundant fun and laughter, he uses art as a communication tool to bring people of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds closer together.

Suggested Q&A:

- How would you describe the Frog King as an artist?  
(Spontaneous, likes to improvise, avant-garde.)
- What kinds of improvised art works/performances has he created?  
(A plastic bag installation, spontaneous percussion with daily objects, soaking a toilet roll with ink and declaring it a sculpture.)

3. Appreciation of Frog King’s art works which use the “sandwich font” (Suggested length: 20 mins)

Play the “Artist Video mp4” 07:10 – 9:11 and show the “Artist Introduction ppt” p6

Suggested Q&A:

- What is the structural characteristic of the “sandwich font”?  
(It is a mix of Chinese and English words.)
- Analyse from the video how the Frog King wrote the word “yum-dimension” with the “sandwich font”.



Show the “Artist Introduction ppt” pp7-9 to appreciate other works of the Frog King that use the “sandwich font”.




4. Introduce the art-making process (Suggested length: 75 mins)

● **Creating characters using the “sandwich font”**

Show the **“Supplementary Teaching Materials ppt” p3**

Using a name as an example, explain how to create a character using the “sandwich font” by combining the Chinese and English versions of the name. Illustrate this with the following examples and invite the students to vote on which one they prefer and share their views. Then explain the importance of structure and visual balance in creating a character:

**Creating characters using the “sandwich font”**



- The form lacks balance between the left and right parts.
- The left and right parts are more balanced, but the structure is rather rigid.
- The structure is livelier.  
• The curved lines create a consistent form with a balanced structure.

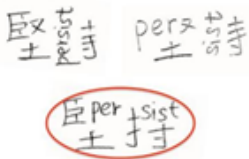
● **Creating characters with the “sandwich font” using a Chinese brush**

Show the **“Supplementary Teaching Materials ppt” pp4-5**

**Creating characters with the “sandwich font” using a Chinese brush**

Form groups of six or seven and create characters using the “sandwich font”:

- Each group selects one line from their prepared lyrics, and distribute the creative work among the team members so that each member has a character to create.
- Each member should create at least one character with the “sandwich font” using a Chinese brush.
- Each group should be given the following resources: drawing paper, Chinese brushes, Chinese ink and an ink slab.
- Create drafts with a pencil and select a word or term to create a character with, create two to three versions and then select the best one. For example:



- While creating the characters with a Chinese brush, pay attention to the form of the calligraphy, including how the various parts can be combined to present a consistent form.



- After finalising their drafts, practice writing with a Chinese brush on drawing paper.

5. **Peer evaluation, revision, and improvising a performance upon completing the design**  
(Suggested length: 60 mins)

Show the **“Supplementary Teaching Materials ppt”** p6

**Peer evaluation, revision, and improvising a performance upon completing the design**

- Each group should share their finalised draft so that teachers and students can appreciate and evaluate it.
- Each group should revise their drafts after the evaluation.
- Content of the evaluation:
  - The reasons for choosing the lyrics.
  - The strengths of the design.
  - How the design could be improved.
- Each group should improvise a performance based on the characters they designed.
  - Make use of various forms of body language and expression.
  - Make use of objects for spontaneous percussion to create sounds and rhythm for the performance.

6. **Improvising a performance and evaluation (Suggested length: 60 mins)**

**Improvising a performance and evaluation**

Each group should improvise a performance with various forms of expression and make a video recording as part of their creative project.

Props	Forms of performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Objects related to the lyrics</li><li>• Microphones</li><li>• Musical instruments</li><li>• Objects for spontaneous percussion</li><li>• Others...</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each person sings a word</li><li>• Some sing while others show the lyrics</li><li>• Body language, such as imitating the form of the characters</li><li>• Tone, facial expressions and mood</li></ul>

7. **Materials**

Chinese brush, Chinese ink, ink slab, *xuan* paper or drawing paper, video-recording equipment, musical instruments